

July 13, 2010

Funding Will Help Provide Area Youth with Critical Work Skills While Revitalizing Local Communities

WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24) announced today that the U.S. Department of Labor has awarded the Workforce Investment Board of Herkimer, Madison and Oneida Counties \$374,376 in funding to continue the WIB's YouthBuild Program. The YouthBuild program assists out-of-school youth in obtaining their diplomas or GEDs, while providing job training in the construction industry.

"Ensuring that all of the youth in our region have access to the best possible training to prepare them for the working world is critical," **said Arcuri, who supported the WIB's grant application for funding and has toured the WIB's past YouthBuild construction site projects**. "I am a strong supporter of the YouthBuild program, and our local efforts, because the program provides our young people with the skills necessary for a great career and success in the future, while providing our region with highly skilled, homegrown talent in areas where we need them most. I am pleased to announce this funding because it helps revitalize our community and provides new opportunities for young people who can use YouthBuild as the first step to a career."

YouthBuild is currently working with Housing Visions Consultants, Inc. (HVC) on the [Kemble Square Neighborhood Revitalization Project](#)

. HVC broke ground on the construction of 37-units of affordable housing for low-income families and veterans in the Cornhill area of Utica on June 7, 2010 after the project was jumpstarted with \$3.8 million in Tax Credit Assistance Program funding through the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*

Workforce Investment Board Chair Gary Scalzo said, "YouthBuild is dedicated to helping young adults who have not experienced success academically or on the job to develop the new skills they need to succeed as well as to bolster their confidence and their leadership skills. By developing the skills of these young adults, we are helping prepare them for the workforce and for successful lives."

WIB Executive Director Alice Savino said of the WIB's efforts help youth and the community. "We are not only transforming the lives of the young people working on the project, we are transforming a building and a community. One of the reasons why YouthBuild is such an outstanding program is that it blends academic skills with workplace skills to help the young people in the project use this as a springboard to their future. YouthBuild is giving new hope to youth, giving them the tools to rebuild their community and their lives, and fulfilling the core YouthBuild mission of revitalizing a community through adding new housing for low-income residents. This project is a great new start for the youth involved, and the community it will help to energize."

The YouthBuild program, administered by the Workforce Investment Board of Herkimer, Madison and Oneida Counties, helps at-risk youth develop critical skills and participate in community service while building and renovating affordable housing within their communities. Specifically, YouthBuild focuses on these critical skill areas:

Academic Skills: Training in academic skills provides functional learning in reading, writing, and mathematics. GED and remedial instruction will be provided by the region's major provider of GED services through classes customized for older youth that will allow for youth to proceed at an individualized pace and offer life skills. Youth will spend 60% of their time in academics.

Construction Skills: Youth will learn construction skills while building two new houses in the target area, a project overseen by Habitat for Humanity, under the direction certified instructors

from Mohawk Valley Community College. The curriculum is developed to meet the needs of employers and union Apprenticeship programs and provides an employer-accepted credential.

Leadership/ Life Management Skills: Leadership will include lessons from the YouthBuild USA leadership curriculum, as well as community-based efforts to support voter registration, participate and show leadership within the project, and conduct service learning on both a project-wide and individual basis. Life skills will help address substance abuse, conflict resolution and other issues that can impact retention in school or at work.

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